



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 11 December 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
11 DECEMBER 1967

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1. Yemen

Sana is still surrounded, but the besieged republicans have evidently won back some ground. There are signs that the republicans may be able to hold out until they can get reinforcements.

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2. North Vietnam

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3. Cambodia

Phnom Penh has taken further measures to improve security in areas along the South Vietnamese border which it feels may be threatened by allied military operations.

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4. Communist China

Peking is faced with new disruptions to the country's railroads. A recent party directive admits that "bad elements" trying to ruin rail transport have caused "great losses." Stealing from warehouses and freight yards is said to be widespread.

These troubles are still far below the level of last summer, but residents of several cities are writing letters about stoppages in deliveries of some kinds of food and about tighter regulations on coal consumption for winter heating.

5. Cyprus

The first Greek troops withdrawn from the island--about 400 men--disembarked last night on the Greek mainland. There is still no word as to when further withdrawals will be made.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Comments by Front Spokesmen: Liberation Front spokesmen are continuing to emphasize the reasonableness and acceptability of their new program and to imply that more than a cessation of the bombing of the North is necessary to bring about conditions for ending the war in the South.

Nguyen Van Tien, the Front representative in Hanoi who is currently in Europe, stated in a 5 December interview on the French radio that the first gesture required to bring about favorable conditions for peace is the cessation of the bombing of the North. He stressed, however, that US acceptance of the Front's objectives is necessary before the fighting in the South can be ended. He defined these objectives as "the cessation of the aggression against us, the cessation of the bombing, the withdrawal of all US and satellite troops from the South, and recognition of the Front."

Much the same line was adopted by the Front representative in Prague, Ha Thanh Lam, in a recent interview in the Italian press, only a portion of which has yet been received. Lam demanded that the US stop the bombing of the North unconditionally but insisted that the NFLSV will continue to fight until the US agrees to withdraw. Both Tien and Lam side-stepped the question of how such a withdrawal would be carried out or whether an agreement to withdraw was sufficient to get negotiations under way.

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The Liberation Front Press Office in Paris: The acting head of the French Foreign Office Far East Section has informed the US Embassy in Paris that his government cannot confirm a recent statement by a Liberation Front spokesman that his organization would soon open a press office in the French capital. The French official claimed that his government had not been officially approached by the Front on this matter, although he felt that such a request would be granted. He pointed out, however, that his government was awaiting a firm request by the Front before taking any final decision on the question.

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Liberation Front on Holiday Truce: The Liberation Front has issued a lengthy statement stressing the humanitarian nature of its proposal for truce periods at Christmas, New Year, and Tet, and calling upon South Vietnamese troops to "force their superiors" to observe the Front's order for a suspension of military attacks. The statement broadcast on 8 December claimed that the South Vietnamese

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Government, "together with their US bosses," are attempting to undermine the Front's initiative for a suspension of military attacks. It pointed out that the Thieu-Ky "clique" has been obliged to pretend to talk about a cease-fire "in order to fool public opinion and to cope with the Front's good will" but that it has had to acquiesce to the US view" proving that it has no right to solve problems dealing with our people's feelings." The statement ended by stressing the Communists' resolve not to let the "enemy" carry out provocative acts or to take advantage of the suspension of military attacks.

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Dac Son Massacre: The Communists are claiming that the more than 100 civilians who were murdered by the Viet Cong near the village of Dac Son in the South Vietnamese province of Bien Hoa on 5 December were actually killed by allied forces. A Hanoi English language broadcast yesterday claimed that US and "puppet" troops fired "wantonly" at two hamlets in the Dac Son area, killing or wounding more than 100 civilians and burning some 200 houses. The broadcast noted that this was only the latest in a series of similar allied "acts of terror."

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Egyptian Casualty: According to press reports, Cairo has claimed that one of its diplomats in Hanoi died recently as the result of injuries suffered during a US air raid on Hanoi in October. The announcement stated that the victim, Gamal Eldin Omar, chargé of the Egyptian mission, was hurt as he dashed to a shelter during the raid, tripped on a flight of stairs, and was fatally injured.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi on Antidraft Demonstrations: Hanoi on 10 December broadcast in English an article in the party daily commenting on "the stop-the-draft week" in the US. The article recounted the recent protest activities in many US cities and claimed that they

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were a further indication of the "uninterrupted development of the American people's movement to condemn and oppose the dirty colonialist war now conducted by the US imperialists in Vietnam." The paper claimed that the US antiwar movement has broadened in the past few weeks and that it includes almost all the "social strata in the US." This, the article points out, makes it clear that the longer the US war of aggression lasts and the more "obdurate" the Johnson "clique" becomes, the more the American people see it their task to "stand up against this aggression." The article closed by praising the American people for braving sacrifices and hardships in continuing their struggle against the rulers of their country, claiming that the protestors are conscious that they are protecting the honor of their country "now stained by the ruling circles."

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More on the Draft Protest: Hanoi on Friday broadcast a detailed list of protest activities related to antidraft week that occurred in several US cities. The demonstration in New York drew particular attention. The broadcast claimed that 2,000 demonstrators clashed with police during a protest march and that 200 Americans tried to break into a hotel where Secretary of State Rusk "was defending the US war of aggression in Vietnam." The broadcast went on to report that the four US sailors who jumped ship in Tokyo were presently in Moscow on a hunger strike in sympathy with the antidraft and antiwar movement at home.

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